

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME
INFO AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
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USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES ITALY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 171863

E.O. 11652: XGDS - 1

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, MT

SUBJECT: MALTESE NEUTRALITY GUARANTEE
REF: A) ROME 12166, B) STATE 126024, C) VALLETTA 1989

1. REF (A) QUOTES MANNO AS SAYING THAT MFA HAD "EARLIER
FAVORED" EXCLUSION OF MAJOR ALLIANCES FROM MALTESE FACILI-
TIES AS OPPOSED TO EXCLUSION OF US AND USSR ALONE. IT,
THEREFORE, APPEARS POSSIBLE THAT MFA PRESENT ATTITUDE MAY
BE EVOLVING TOWARDS US POSITION AS STATED REF (B).

2. EMBASSY IS, THEREFORE, REQUESTED TO SEEK EARLY
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OPPORTUNITY TO INFORM MANNO OR OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIAL
THAT US BELIEVES THAT CHANGE FROM PROPOSED NEUTRALITY
GUARANTEE LANGUAGE EXCLUDING MEMBERS OF MAJOR ALLIANCES
TO LANGUAGE EXCLUDING ONLY US AND USSR WOULD BE OF GREAT
VALUE TO WESTERN INTERESTS IN MALTA; AND TO URGE MFA
CONSIDERATION OF SEEKING SUCH A CHANGE.

3. US VIEWS EXCLUSION OF "SUPERPOWERS" PREFERABLE TO EXCLUSION OF MAJOR ALLIANCE MEMBERS BECAUSE A) PRESENT LANGUAGE EXCLUDES NATO FORCES WHICH ARE NOT NOW DENIED ACCESS, B) EXCLUSION OF NATO VESSELS IS NOT BALANCED BY EXCLUSION OF WARSAW PACT VESSELS, AS NAVAL FORCES OF WESTERN EUROPE ARE GREATLY SUPERIOR TO THOSE OF EASTERN

EUROPE, C) WE VIEW POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET CIRCUMVENTION OF EXCLUSION BY FLYING WARSAW PACT FLAGS AS UNLIKELY, AND D) JURIDICAL CONCERNS APPEAR NOT VERY SIGNIFICANT IN DOCUMENT WHICH IS LEGALLY SUSPECT AND WHOSE REAL VALUE IS POLITICAL.

4. MINTOFF HIMSELF APPEARS TO REGRET COMPLETE EXCLUSION OF WESTERN ACCESS, AND HAS COMPLAINED IN THE PAST THAT APPEARANCE OF WESTERN LACK OF INTEREST IN MALTA MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO FEND OFF PRESSURE FROM THE LIBYANS. HE MAY, THEREFORE, BE RECEPTIVE TO A RETURN TO SOMETHING APPROACHING HIS ORIGINAL LANGUAGE, AND WE BELIEVE THAT IS VERY MUCH IN THE INTERESTS OF MALTA'S MEDITERRANEAN NEIGHBORS THAT SOME WESTERN ACCESS IS PRESERVED. VANCE

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Message Attributes

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